

# Christ Lutheran Church & The Bridge Campus Ministry

## March 1, 2026 – Second Sunday in Lent

***Connecting people to people • people to faith • faith to life***

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**(PLEASE POWER OFF OR AIRPLANE MODE YOUR DEVICES)**

*Here in Athens, in SE Ohio, we are occupying the traditional homeland of the Shawnee people. Before the Shawnee, this land was occupied by the Osage people, and by the Adena, Hopewell, and Fort Ancient cultures.*

**SERVING TODAY:** *Presider/Preacher: Trinity; Organist: George Weckman; Choir Director: Christian Yoder; Choir Accompanist: Donnalee Yoder; Pianist: Patricia Cambridge; Custodian: Nic Swain, Ministry Support: Danielle Huber, Lector: Trinity; Time with Children: Trinity; Ushers: Tim Prange, Nick Claussen; Greeter: Solviog Spjeldnes; Acolyte: Elizabeth; Tray Server: Jane Unger; Livestream: Doug Debrick*

### **WELCOME AND PRELUDE**

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who forgives all our sin,  
whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt  
and blots out all offenses.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For failing to recognize your coming reign,  
and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,  
and for disdain the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For disregarding voices from the margin,

and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,

and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound.

Through faith, the free gift of God,

you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead

dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts,

and gives you life and peace.

**Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG**

***Blessed Assurance (ELW 638)***



- 1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
- 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
- 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.  
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.  
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

*Refrain*



This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915

Music: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830–1908

## **GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

## **KYRIE**

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above,  
and for our salvation,  
let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world,  
for the well-being of the Church of God,  
and for the unity of all,  
let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house,  
and for all who offer here their worship and praise,  
let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.  
**Amen.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

**Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## **TIME WITH CHILDREN**

### **FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a**

A reading from Genesis.

<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

<sup>4a</sup> So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM: Psalm 121

- <sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes to the hills;  
from where is my help to come?
- <sup>2</sup> **My help comes from the LORD,  
the maker of heaven and earth.**
- <sup>3</sup> The LORD will not let your foot be moved  
nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.
- <sup>4</sup> **Behold, the keeper of Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep;**
- <sup>5</sup> the LORD watches over you;  
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
- <sup>6</sup> **the sun will not strike you by day,  
nor the moon by night.**
- <sup>7</sup> The LORD will preserve you from all evil  
and will keep your life.
- <sup>8</sup> **The LORD will watch over your going out and your coming in,  
from this time forth forevermore.**

## SECOND READING: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

A reading from Romans.

<sup>1</sup> What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? <sup>2</sup> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. <sup>3</sup> For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." <sup>4</sup> Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. <sup>5</sup> But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

<sup>13</sup> For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>14</sup> For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. <sup>15</sup> For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

<sup>16</sup> For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, <sup>17</sup> as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"), in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.*

One does not live by <sup>1</sup> bread alone, **but by every word that comes from the <sup>1</sup> mouth of God.** (Matt. 4:4)

## GOSPEL: John 3:1-17

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. <sup>2</sup> He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one

can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.”<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.”

<sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?”<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.<sup>6</sup> What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.”<sup>7</sup> Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’<sup>8</sup> The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”<sup>9</sup> Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?”<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

<sup>11</sup> “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony.<sup>12</sup> If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?<sup>13</sup> No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.<sup>14</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,<sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup> “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

<sup>17</sup> “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON



HYMN OF THE DAY *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* (ELW 742)



1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!  
2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?  
3 Are we weak and heav - y - lad - en, cum - bered with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!  
We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged—take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge—take it to the Lord in prayer.



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; oh, what need - less pain we bear—  
Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor - row share?  
Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



all be - cause we do not car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer!  
Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak - ness—take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so - lace there.

Text: Joseph Scriven, 1820–1886  
Music: CONVERSE, Charles C. Converse, 1832–1918

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Let us pray for the church, the world, and all people according to their needs.....

God of Love, as we journey through Lent, we repent of our sin and brokenness. Surround us with the warmth of your forgiveness. Help us turn from our selfishness, doubt, and desire for control and strive for a new relationship with you. We pray for a strong faith like Abraham, who fully trusted in you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful Lord, your Scriptures tell us that we can't love God whom we have not seen, if we don't love our brothers and sisters in this world. Help us to embrace everyone and to extend kindness as we follow Christ's teaching to love our neighbors as ourselves. Inspire us to make you the priority in our lives, share the Good News, forgive others, and work for equity and justice. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Prince of Peace, we pray that your spirit will spread throughout our broken world. Bring calm to places where chaos and violence reign, so people living in fear will be healed. Bestow wisdom

and courage on the world's leaders to pursue compromise and to end war, torture, and revenge. Protect and comfort all who serve in the military, their families, and veterans. We also pray for safety for all refugees and people dealing with the effects of weather disasters. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of Creation, you so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. You also taught that faith alone, apart from our works, brings this grace. We pray for your help to share our abundance with those in need in response to your grace. Inspire us to be careful stewards of your beautiful world and to use the Earth's resources wisely. Empower us to recognize and use our many talents to their fullest. Bless all pastors, bishops, and lay church leaders. We also rejoice with those who are celebrating anniversaries, birthdays, and other happy occasions. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Healing Lord, we pray for all who are ill in mind, body, or spirit. We also lift up those who deal with long-term diagnoses, such as addictions, cancer, dementia, and depression. Pour your balm on them and restore them to wholeness. Watch over our shut-ins and help us bring them joy and companionship. Bless all medical staff and researchers that they will find cures. Grant patience and strength to all caregivers so they may provide the best care and compassion. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of Mercy, listen now as we offer other prayers, either silently or aloud..... Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Comforter, we pray for those who are dying and the loved ones of those who have passed away. Rest your peace, strength, and hope on the family and friends who mourn. Remind us all of the promise of eternal life. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

#### **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

#### **OFFERING – THANK YOU! YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES OUR MINISTRY POSSIBLE.**

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There you will also find instructions for how you can text to give or by downloading our church app!

#### **MUSICAL OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY*****Create in Me a Clean Heart***

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right  
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take  
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of  
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923  
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

**OFFERING PRAYER**

O God, maker of heaven and earth,  
your steadfast love embraces all creation.  
You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth  
and bring forth its bounty.  
Through these gifts of bread and wine,  
draw us into the death and life of your Son,  
who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.  
We ask this in Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

**DIALOGUE**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts  
 and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,  
 that, renewed in the gift of baptism,  
 we may come to the fullness of your grace.  
 And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
 with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
 we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of  
 pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -  
 san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the  
 name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy God,  
 our living Water and our merciful Guide,  
 together with rivers and seas, wells and springs  
 we bless and magnify you.  
 You led your people Israel through the desert,  
 and provided them water from the rock.  
 We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water,  
 who joined us in our desert,  
 pouring out his life for the world.  
 In the night in which he was betrayed,  
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
 Do this for the remembrance of me.  
 Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
 and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
 Do this for the remembrance of me.  
 Remembering, therefore,  
 his life, death, and resurrection,  
 we await your salvation for all this thirsty world.  
 Pour out your Spirit on this holy food  
 and on all the baptized gathered for this feast:

wash away our sin,  
that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.  
Through him all glory and honor is yours,  
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,  
in your holy Church,  
both now and forever. **Amen**

#### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Come to the table.  
Feast on God's goodness and mercy.  
**Thanks be to God!**

#### **COMMUNION**

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God of our salvation,  
we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls,  
reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey.  
Through the body and blood of your Son,  
may we become Christ's body in the world,  
bearing witness to your love for all creation,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **BLESSING**

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity:  
God, who calls all things into existence,  
Jesus Christ, who redeems us,  
and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation,  
✠ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

## SENDING SONG

*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (ELW 631)*

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to  
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry  
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy  
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less



earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy  
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us  
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -  
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -



faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,  
 find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;  
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,  
 ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,



pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with  
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as  
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee  
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.  
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.  
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.  
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788

Music: HYFRYDOL, Rowland H. Prichard, 1811–1887

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**